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How to  
Teach  
the  
Little Folks

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# HOW TO TEACH THE LITTLE FOLKS.

I. THE PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

By J. BENNET TYLER.

II. METHODS IN THE CLASS.

By MRS. G. R. ALDEN.

III. HOW TO TEACH AN INFANT CLASS.

By FAITH LATIMER.

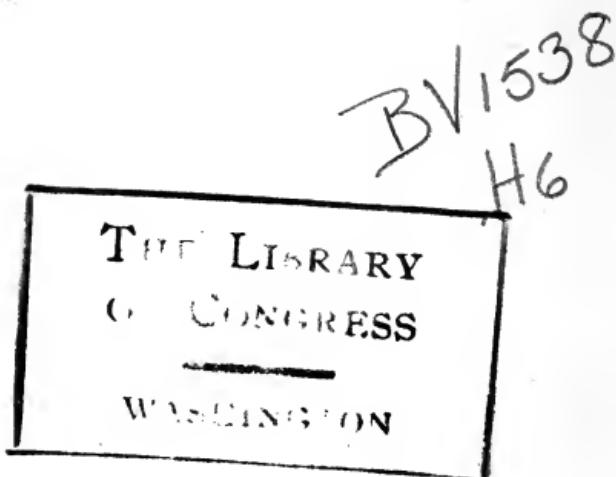
IV. METHODS IN MISSION SCHOOLS.

By MRS. GEORGE PARTRIDGE.



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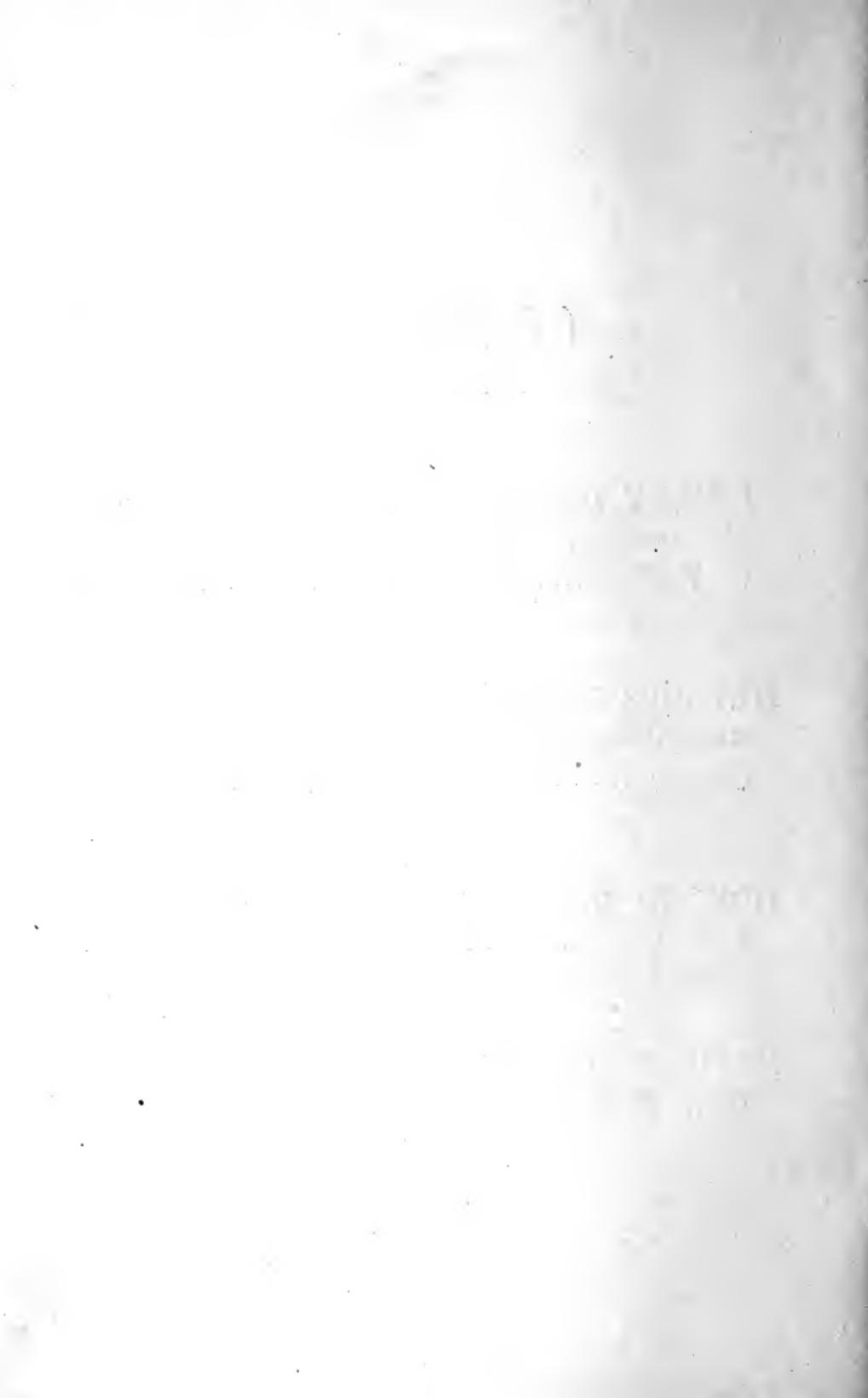
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## INTRODUCTORY NOTE.

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THE design of this little manual is simply to group together in cheap and convenient form a few suggestions on the teaching and management of the most important classes in our Sabbath-schools, and to take them from the standpoint of the practical teacher. The three ladies who give us in brief outline their methods and experience are representative primary-class teachers to whom the Master has given rare skill and success in this department of Christian work.

J. B. T.



# *Primary Department.*

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ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT.

GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

BY J. BENNET TYLER.



# HOW TO TEACH LITTLE FOLKS.

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## I.

### PRIMARY DEPARTMENT.

#### *ORGANIZATION AND MANAGEMENT.*

#### GENERAL PRINCIPLES.

“And he took a little child and set him in the midst.”

“O thou bright and singing babe,  
What shalt thou be hereafter?

\* \* \* \* \*

’Tis ages since He made his youngest star,  
His hand were on thee as ’twere yesterday.”

PRIMARY classes are the most important, for the reason that very early impressions are deepest and most lasting. This fact is in part conceded, but it should be more distinctly and

emphatically recognized. We should believe in and confidently expect the regeneration of the little children of our Christian households and well-taught primary classes, and at a very early age. These classes should be officered and managed and taught with this aim and expectation clearly and always in view.

The following suggestions are made with the hope that they may prove of value in the management and teaching of the primary department of the Bible school.

#### THE NAME.

1. We are not sure that it is best to call it the infant class. Young America don't like the name, and we quite agree with him. The boy who is just donning his first pants and getting into those marvelous new boots no longer considers himself an infant. Infant, in the vocabulary of young children, means the baby in mother's arms. The wide-awake little folks who are going to school are no longer babies. Why call them such? Some

schools have what are termed both infant and primary departments, putting only the very small children into the infant class so called, and promoting them into the primary department when they are deemed sufficiently advanced. The name "Infant Class" is of course not so objectionable when applied to very young children.

#### ROOMS.

2. It is of no small importance to give the little folks a bright, airy, sunshiny room. Make it as attractive and beautiful as resources will allow. Labor and pains and money are well expended in surrounding the young children with the most pleasant and healthful associations as connected with their religious education.

3. Make the room sufficiently large. Don't crowd the small children into a closet, don't put them in the attic or in the cellar. Provide comfortable seats, so that little feet can touch the floor. If a large number is to be

accommodated, the seats should rise gently from the front, and the best form is semicircular. It should connect by sliding doors with the main school-room, so that all departments can be thrown together for devotional exercises. It is not wise to isolate either adult or primary classes from the main school, especially if the school is comparatively small. The one helps the other, and the sympathy and stimulus of numbers is no small matter. If a separate room is absolutely impracticable of attainment, appropriate a corner of the main room, and shut it off with heavy curtains, and sing in a whisper, and conduct the exercises as quietly as possible. If the seats are too high, attach a little shelf at the right height for little feet to reach. This can be adjusted with hinges, so that it may be let down when occupied by adults. It is little less than barbarous to require small children to sit for a long time with feet dangling in mid air.

## THE INSTRUCTOR.

4. Secure the very best teacher that can be had—the most genial, affectionate, sprightly, child-loving person available. No long faces, or morose dispositions, or acid temperaments should be suffered in this department. Ladies as a rule make the best teachers of young children.

5. Have a system and a distinct order of proceeding. Many classes of this kind are inefficient because conducted without plan or system.

6. Singing should be a leading feature. Change posture often and sing frequently, and mainly such hymns as are worthy of being committed to memory. Some of the children's hymns so called have neither poetic merit nor correct religious sentiment to commend them. All such should be studiously ignored. It is not wise to be constantly teaching new hymns and tunes. A few choice hymns thoroughly committed to memory and a few excellent tunes well learned are vastly

more valuable than a large number partially or superficially taught.

#### SUBDIVISION.

7. If the class is very large, it is often well to subdivide and place classes in charge of young teachers who can aid in preserving order, teach the oral lessons, such as the golden text, the hymn or selected verse. This method not only helps to preserve order, but greatly relieves the instructor in charge. Quite young teachers trained under the direction of the superintending teacher will do well for oral teaching, and will thus be put in training for more advanced work. While a few rare teachers like Ralph Wells, or Mrs. Partridge, or Mrs. Alden, or Mrs. Miller, and here and there another, can interest and hold a class of young children numbered by hundreds, the great majority must do it but poorly, and even the best need to be relieved from so great a strain. Even for classes not very large the teacher needs some system that

provides for getting on in an orderly manner when the teacher in charge is sick or necessarily absent. Judicious subdivision provides both for the one and the other.

8. The superintending teacher will of course be responsible for the greater portion of the actual instruction and conduct the general exercises, such as recalling the oral teaching and concert recitation, and such continuous recapitulation and review as will fasten the lessons in the memory.

#### ONE TRUTH AT A TIME.

Primary teachers need to guard carefully against attempting too much. Cramming young minds leads to premature and unhealthy development of the forward and precocious, and to discouragement and repression of the dull and backward. A verse or two thoroughly learned, a point made plain, or so aptly illustrated that even dull scholars measurably understand it, is much better than a whole lesson crudely and imperfectly

taught, or so taught that only a few of the brightest comprehend and remember. A point or two of the uniform lesson is usually quite enough, and this should be embodied in or clustered around the verse or verses memorized. If this is first taught orally, then recalled, illustrated, recalled again, made clear and familiar, so as to be understood and fastened in the memory, a great deal has been effected, and much more than is commonly accomplished in teaching classes of very young children. A few of the brighter and more precocious children may sometimes be successfully taught the whole lesson, but the dull and backward, and often the majority, will have been confused and muddled instead of instructed, by attempting more than one or two simple truths of the current lesson, wisely and skillfully adapted to young capacities.

9. Life, sprightliness and variety are vastly important. In addition to what it is feasible to teach of the current lesson, verses of hymns,

the catechism for young children, the Lord's Prayer and the commandments should be taught, little by little, always having a care that young minds are not overtaxed, and that the additional lessons, as far as may be practicable, shall be in harmony with the lesson of the day.

#### OBJECT ILLUSTRATION.

10. If possible, have a neat cabinet, locked and half concealed, with pictures, diagrams and all available curiosities that may serve for illustrating Scripture lessons. Use this sparingly and only for illustration. Stimulate curiosity, but gratify it with great care and economy. Hence pictures intended for illustration should not hang on the wall; they become too familiar and lose their attractiveness. The blackboard may be made of great value in this department. Plain, crude blackboard exercises will serve often to excite curiosity and arrest attention as well as to illustrate truth.

## WORD-PICTURES.

All primary-class teaching should be made sprightly, graphic and real. Introduce little, brief word-pictures and such other apt and pertinent illustrations as can be adapted to effective use. Bring out in a few terse, vivid sentences the scene or object or person, so that the children can see what is described in distinct relief. This, as well as the effective use of illustrations, requires patient and careful study. **SIMPLIFY, ILLUSTRATE and REPEAT** in *varied forms* should be a cherished motto with all teachers of young children.

We have endeavored only to outline a few general principles applicable to the teaching of young children. In small schools it will often, and perhaps as a rule, be better for the primary class to be in charge of a single teacher, with one or two competent assistants. Suitable rooms and teachers will not always be attainable for proper subdivision. Other schools will find it advantageous to put all the younger children into one class, and subdivi-

vide and arrange in classes as soon as they may be able fairly to read and commit a given lesson. No set of rules can be adapted to all circumstances. But care should be taken always that the younger scholars should be provided with the best teachers and cared for in the best possible manner.

#### TEACH POSITIVE TRUTH.

Finally, teachers of little folks should never fear or hesitate about teaching substantial truth. Avoid pet pious phrases and a sanctimonious manner and terms of very affectionate endearment. Teach the little ones that they are sinners and need to be forgiven; that Jesus has died for them—for John and Susie, and James and Mary—and that little ones may please and serve and love him; that the great, the omniscient God is our Father and our Friend. Teach the old, old story, found in greater or less distinctness on almost every page of the Bible, that Jesus, once a little child, is the children's friend, and

may be the little child's accepted Saviour, and that the youngest may come to him, such is his wondrous grace. May grace be given to the mothers and the teachers, lovingly and trustingly to lead the young lambs to the fold of the great Shepherd !

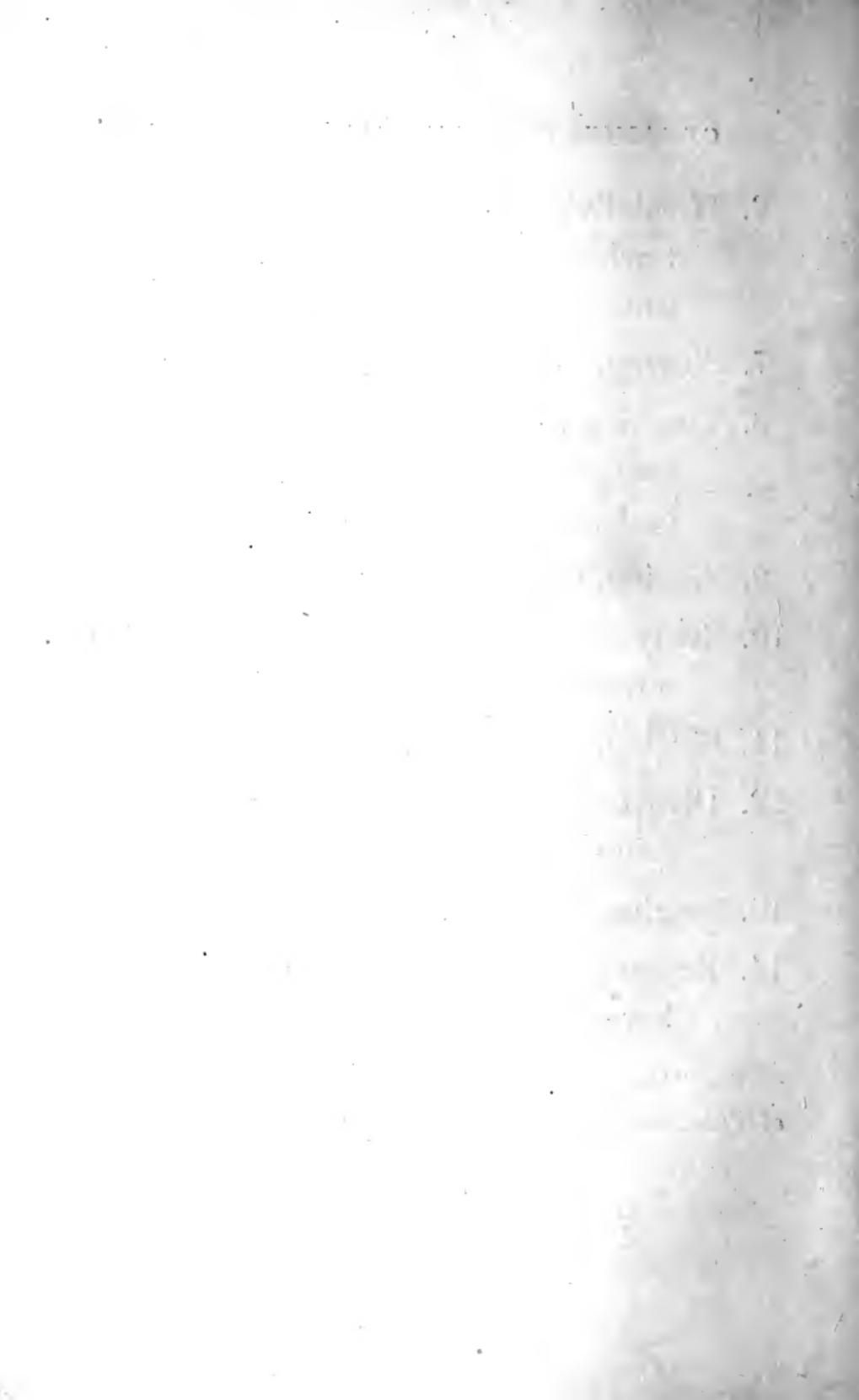
The following order of exercises for the primary department may prove suggestive. The class is supposed to have joined in the devotional exercises of the school, and is now occupying its separate apartment.

#### PROGRAMME.

1. Singing, one minute. Whisper song, if in main room.
2. Collection.
3. Roll-call. This can be done very quickly, and pleases little children.
4. Review of last Sunday's lesson, ten minutes.
5. Singing a single stanza.

6. If subdivided, oral teaching by the sub-teachers of the text or hymn to be committed, ten minutes.
7. Singing, one minute.
8. Teaching of the lesson by the teacher in charge, with concert recitation of the oral lesson, fifteen minutes.
9. Singing, one minute.
10. Study of the hymn with the teachers, ten minutes.
11. Singing, one minute.
12. Distribution of cards, papers, etc., five minutes.
13. Singing one verse.
14. Repeat the Lord's Prayer in concert, followed by some sentence of Scripture.

(See "Series for Memorizing," Presbyterian Board of Publication.)



# *Methods in the Class.*

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TALKS WITH PRIMARY-CLASS TEACHERS.

BY PANSY (MRS. G. R. ALDEN).



## II.

### METHODS IN THE CLASS.

#### *TALKS WITH PRIMARY-CLASS TEACHERS.*

A MAXIM familiar to my youth was, "Set your mark high; and though you may not reach it, your aim will be higher than though you had a low standard." So in primary-class rooms I have never enjoyed what I considered a perfect room, yet perhaps the knowledge of what I *would* have if I could has put my *could have* into better shape. My ideal class-room, then, is bright, well ventilated, curtained, carpeted, low, easy seats, flowers on the desk and in the windows, ornamental pictures on the walls, a good-sized portable revolving blackboard in a central position, a song-roll at the lower end, maps and charts

and diagrams and “leaf-clusters,” and whatever else will help to illustrate Bible truths gathered into that pleasant spot. With all this in my mind’s eye, I *can* and *have* taught an infant class over the vestibule of a dingy old church with pictures cut out of a Bible dictionary for illustration and a broken slate for a blackboard. Still, I would not occupy an *utterly* unattractive spot for any great length of time. It is never necessary to do so, because home pictures and flowers are cheap, and tact and patience can transform any sort of a place into something like beauty. I always have the best room I can get, and make it as attractive as possible.

#### CLASSIFICATION AND ARRANGEMENT.

I think as a general rule a primary class proper should be composed of only those scholars who cannot read. This rule, however, is subject to endless variations according to locality and previous advantages. There are some little wonders who read well

at six and seven who nevertheless ought to be trained in a primary-class, and I have met with girls and boys of fair judgment and of nearly or quite medium size who nevertheless were very poor readers. I once had a class of wee ones who were afraid to whisper, even, who could not be coaxed to repeat their verses, who cried if I addressed them individually, who could not under any circumstances be beguiled into trying to sing. I went to the schoolroom proper and imported therefrom half a dozen bright little girls—good readers, some of them, but with pretty childlike ways; they knew their lessons and were not afraid to say so, and they sang like birds. The consequence was that my timid ones soon caught their spirit, and my class of infants which bade fair to be a dismal failure became a success. It seems impossible to adhere to arbitrary rules in the matter of classification.

As to arrangement, when my room will admit of it I like my class in a long semicircle rather than rows of pupils tier on tier behind

each other. This latter arrangement gives hiding-places for the mischievous ones and makes it impossible for you to get near to all your scholars. If I had twenty pupils, I would like them seated side by side; if I had forty, I suppose I should have to arrange them in tiers, but I would make the rows as long as possible and invariably seat the mischievous ones in front.

#### PROGRAMME.

I have found the following order convenient and valuable:

1, Roll-call; 2, prayer; 3, collection; 4, singing; 5, five minutes' talk about the hymn sung; 6, distribution of cards for next Sabbath's lesson; 7, reading those cards in concert; 8, singing; 9, distribution of papers; 10, recitation of verses.

The opening prayer is very brief—a few simple sentences, letting class repeat them after me—closing with the Lord's Prayer in concert. After collection I ask those who have remem-

bered their pennies to rise and repeat in concert the following little verse :

“Small are the offerings we can make,  
But thou hast taught us, Lord,  
If given for the Saviour’s sake,  
They lose not their reward.”

Reading the cards in concert is to familiarize those who cannot read with the sound of the words. They rapidly learn in this way to spell out the verses for themselves. The hymn-talk is familiar, colloquial and explanatory. The distribution of papers at that time is for the purpose of avoiding any outside influence or interruption after the lesson proper has commenced. Throughout these exercises I give opportunity for frequent change of position, rising to sing, to recite in concert, etc. I call upon a scholar to pass the box for collection, the class counting the pennies as they are dropped ; another scholar passes the papers, another the cards. It is well to make the pupils helpers. The tenth exercise, reci-

tation of verses, does not refer to the Bible lesson for the day, but to Bible verses or hymns taught the class in concert, some of them in the form of question and answer—*i. e.*, What are the gods of the heathen like? (Class.) “Eyes have they, but they see not,” etc. Let the scholars point to the different portions of the body indicated by the words they speak. Also in verses of poetry,

“Two little eyes to look to God,  
Two little ears to hear his word,”

etc. Anything that the teacher can select that will teach religious truth, and can at the same time be made into an exercise for the muscles and conduce to change in posture, will be found valuable in a primary class.

#### ASSISTANTS.

In regard to this matter I do not agree with many of our prominent Sunday-school workers. I do not think it ordinarily desirable to subdivide so that the lesson is taught

by different teachers, for these reasons: 1. My experience has been that it is very difficult to find in a Sunday-school of average size a sufficient number of teachers who can be spared who are fitted to make Bible truth clear to very little people. 2. Unless they are mere machines, they will each take a widely different method of teaching, impressing one thought at the expense of another, and the summing up by the leader will often appear to the little people like another lesson, distinct from the one their teacher has given them. 3. If they should all happen to be excellent teachers, and all have so arranged their lesson by preparing it together that the central thought would be the same, I still believe that little children, unless in very large classes, can be better taught by one person, speaking to them in a natural tone of voice, standing before them, and by more or less of concert recitation. I like one assistant, or, if the class is very large, two, in order that the roll may be taken quietly and without loss of time, as

well as that the teacher may reserve her strength for teaching while the assistant leads in singing or in recitation. An assistant also is needed for many little details of arrangement that take time.

I think that the assistant should be one who in the necessary absence of the teacher proper would be able to conduct the entire service.

There may be circumstances, however, in which it is advisable to divide the class for a short interval. It may be desirable in large schools, and the objections to subdivisions would of course be largely obviated where sub-teachers can be trained under the eye of the principal teacher and utilized to aid in preserving order and teach the oral lessons, leaving the real teaching work, the rehearsal and the concert exercises in the hands of the principal. But to the oft-made objection that one teacher has not time to hear the verses recited I answer, Teach the class to recite in concert, and in such beautiful musical concert that the least hesitating voice can be detected;

then let one or two or three or six, according to time, recite separately.

#### THE LESSON.

The main feature of every true primary class is, I think, the lesson. I make the memorizing of one verse very important. I give out the verse on cards the previous Sabbath, and build the lesson on that verse. I do not choose the golden text—1. Because very little children often fail to see clearly the connection between the spiritual meaning in the golden text and the actual story or fact that is taught them for a lesson. 2. They get the impression that they are not studying the same lessons that their older brothers and sisters at home are preparing, and the idea of uniformity is lost. 3. I consider the golden text a beautiful application of the lesson as taught, but not *the* lesson. I would like it on a pretty white card to put into the hands of every scholar at the close of the lesson—the *final, personal* thought to be taken home with them.

## 34 HOW TO TEACH LITTLE FOLKS.

But I would select the most striking verse in the lesson given for memorizing, make an emphatic point of its very correct recitation, and in telling the story let the class bring in their verse just where it belongs in the chain, so that they might see the connection plainly. The delight which little children feel in discovering that what they have learned fits in with what their teacher is telling them a story about, can only be appreciated by those who see it.

It is well to make the lesson into a story whenever it can be done, and there is hardly one that cannot be so arranged. I invite questions and give information in the form of questions that are to be answered. I like to cluster all my talk about one central, personal, practical thought that will make clear the fact that the story is for each little boy and girl who hears it. It is important to use illustrations gleaned from the home and school and playground experiences of the little people wherever such can be used without wounding the feelings.

### THE BLACKBOARD.

It is rare that we find a lesson that cannot be better taught by the use of a blackboard or a slate. Mrs. Crafts has put into a very brief sentence its superiority over printed pictures: "Children are invariably more impressed with what grows into being before their eyes than with what is brought in a completed form before them." I like pictures and objects, and use them whenever I can, but like the blackboard better. I never attempt elaborate drawing. In the first place, I cannot draw anything. In the second place, I would not if I could, in a Sunday-school room; there is not time. The barest outline is all you can spare time for and all that you need. A blackboard used constantly throughout the lesson—a mark for this one, a dot for that, a crooked line for a river, an oval for a lake—is better for an infant class than a careful summing up of the lesson at the close. If I can begin my lesson by some kind of a

dot or sign placed on the blackboard, I am sure of the attention of every one in the class, at least until they find out what that mark is for. If I need such a dot or mark or line as the most mischievous and troublesome one there can make for me, I have won him, as a rule, for that day.

#### CLOSING EXERCISES.

I do not like any distribution of books or pictures or papers at the conclusion of a lesson. No outside matter should be allowed to come in between the pupils and the impression earnestly sought to be made. If it is possible to procure a golden text card for each one, I have my assistant pass them around. We read the verse together, and reread it until the bright ones can repeat it from memory and then talk with the class about it. Take, for example, the first of the series for 1875, those blessed words of encouragement and promise spoken to Joshua. The children have been learning about them, and now the

application of the golden text, "Thou therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus"—not grace for Joshua simply, but for *me*, if I am in Christ Jesus. Thus, through the entire series of lessons, any one reading them over will be struck with their marked fitness for personal application. I do not even like to sing for a closing exercise unless the hymn selected bears a striking connection with the impressive point. I like better to close with a very brief prayer woven out of the words of the golden text, and so send the little ones away with a sweet and clear impression of the Bible lesson of the day.



# How to Teach an Infant Class.

BY FAITH LATIMER.



### III.

#### HOW TO TEACH AN INFANT CLASS.

To answer this question it seems requisite not to explain the manner of teaching a specific lesson, but to take a broad view of a department of work in our Sabbath-schools. If we were required to condense into one word all the qualifications necessary to teach an infant class, we would say LOVE. Nor should this be any mere emotional sentiment, but a deep and abiding principle which would prompt and execute every measure relating to the work of the primary department. This principle would include love to Christ, love for Scripture truth, love for children; from these, as surely as warmth comes in the sun-beams, there would follow love for the work, wherein all these could have active exercise.

Since “God is love,” and we are privileged to be “workers together with him,” then our motive-power must be *love*, for “*love* is the fulfilling of the law.”

It is not of small importance *where* the class is to be taught. Let it be in the very best place you can secure apart from the rest of the school, where little ones can be comfortably seated, so that the teacher and assistants can pass among them all close enough to see every gesture, look into each other’s eyes and extend to every one the magnetic influence of close heart-earnestness. Much has been written about the room, how to build and arrange it. Have, if you can, a room with an elevated floor; rows of little chairs, so that feet and elbows may be without a temptation to dangle or jog their neighbors; pictures on your walls; mottoes in plain bright letters; blackboards with colored chalks; a library or cabinet of treasures and objects for illustration. Have as many of these as you are able. But yet, with a trifling or cold-hearted

or superficial or stilted teacher, you might as well try to warm guests in a palace of ice with pictured fires as to expect your primary class to be a success in making child-Christians.

#### THE IMMEDIATE AIM.

What is the *object of the primary class?* It is not to amuse or to entertain; not a mere exhibition-room for visitors; not to get the home chatterboxes out of the way to let somebody enjoy an extra nap; not to teach little folks how to behave in school or church. None of these. But before little feet have learned to walk in paths of wrong, to start them heavenward; before the lips have learned *evil speaking*, to tune them to words of praise and prayer; to take hearts not yet encased in worldliness and sin and stamp on them the image of Christ. Only let this be the purpose, and you will have an infant class wherever there are young souls to be led toward heaven, even though it be under a great

spreading tree in summer or a borrowed neighboring kitchen in winter.

Having a place to teach, gather the children. To have a prosperous class this must be a constant part of the work. Here we may well begin by copying

#### THE MODEL TEACHER.

Long before he came to earth the promise was given that he should "*gather* the lambs," not calling them to follow, but should "*carry* them in his bosom." The promise was literally fulfilled. Christ not only inspired the hosannas of the children, but used a little child to enforce a lesson on his disciples; he not only set the child in the midst, but by his own side and within his arms. The child who nestled there felt, but could not express, that the divine heart which throbbed with human pulsations against its own could *sympathize* with childhood. The teacher who would *gather* and *keep* the children must in heart and feeling become as a little child. So

it was and ever will be with Christ. In his eternal memories of scenes in his humanity how many must there be of days and hours in the Nazareth home, of struggles and privations, the silent, busy mother over household work, the toiling father, the trials of infancy and early boyhood that opened in his heart a perpetual fount of tender pity for every tear of childhood! The teacher who has not enough real kinship with children to enter with *genuine*, not assumed, interest into *little* joys and sorrows, who is too dignified to have a simple, lively manner both in and out of the class, might as well be placed in a solemn corner of the adult Bible class, for stiff, cold teaching can no more succeed than dried butterflies pinned in rows in a cabinet can fly.

It would require a volume, arranged by wise experience and a skillful pen, rather than a brief paper, to describe all the ways in which an earnest teacher can instruct the group of listening ones. The short time allotted to

the lesson for the day is only a part of the work, like the face of the watch, which gives the hours and minutes, but does not show the delicately-coiled, ever-moving spring, the busy, tireless wheels and tiny jeweled arms, each performing its work. Let the teacher have clearly in mind

#### WHAT TO TEACH.

There are two fundamental truths which should be the basis of all primary teaching, whether from mother-lips in the home or in the nursery of the church, which the primary department may surely be called. They are *a knowledge of Christ and of prayer.*

#### TEACH A LOVING, PERSONAL SAVIOUR.

By this we mean to present Jesus so lovingly, so plainly, so truly, that in all the simplicity of early trust the child-heart may know him and love him as a real and ever-present companion, a guide, an ever-living, loving friend and a forgiving Saviour. The life

history of Jesus, his miracles, his parables, his precepts, the touching story of his years of self-denying service, the scenes of his sufferings, his death as an atonement for sin, can be understood by little children.

Do not stop with the mere story as tender hearts thrill in love and pity. Enforce the claim for responsive love and service to One who is a living, interceding Saviour, a constant Advocate and Friend for those who accept his salvation.

#### TEACHING TO PRAY.

When this teaching of Christ is understood and believed, the child can easily see and feel that to pray is simply to tell its heart-sorrows and wants and thanks and love to that Friend whose listening ear ever waits to hear. At some time during every session let the children themselves pray. Teach them to feel that it is *their* prayer. Let them with folded hands, bowed heads and closed eyes repeat after the leader a few words at a time in short

sentences, expressing real child-wants and thanksgivings in plain, earnest language. Cultivate this intimate acquaintance with Christ and habits of prayer. Do it constantly, faithfully, and you have anchored souls upon a rock where future waves of infidelity and doubt may dash in vain.

#### CHRIST IN EVERY LESSON.

Teach the truth of God in his own inspired words. Every lesson can have a golden text which holds the very heart of the truth to be taught short, simple, striking ; either require that to be learned at home or teach it in your class, then let your whole lesson illustrate, explain and fix it indelibly in the memory.

There were many who doubted if the international series of lessons could be successfully adapted to infant classes. We believe it is the testimony of all that to no class has that lesson-plan been a greater blessing. We fear that many times such classes have been entertained with sing-song rhymes, cunningly-

devised fables and mere stories. But with these lessons and the admirable expositions in so much of our Sunday-school literature, the lesson-leaves with their large-type golden texts seem like "the leaves of the tree for the healing of the nations." In every lesson in the Old Testament or the New you can find and teach Christ—not by lecturings or solemn warnings only, but with endless variety, with illustration, by questions, by constant and frequent repetitions and thorough reviews. Draw out again from the class what you have told them, trying to induce each child to take some part in the replies.

#### THE REVIEW.

An important yet sometimes difficult task is to make a monthly or quarterly review interesting and profitable. To do this teach each lesson and golden text as connected with the last, and let each be in part a review of the previous one. Do not let the children be mere listeners; give all something to do. If

one is restless, arrest him with a question. Sometimes let all rise at a signal and repeat in concert the golden text, or let it be divided in responses from one side of the room or one seat to another. If the class be large, by all means have several assistants, for there are many trifling wants among so many, and a lost button or loose shoe-string may be a serious interruption to the teacher with heart and soul full of a precious message.

#### SIMPLIFY AND ILLUSTRATE.

Let the language of the teacher be simple, childlike, but not childish, familiar words and illustrations of familiar things. The master teacher taught truths from the birds of the air, the grass, the flowers, homely and humble scenes such as children notice and understand, the sweeping of the house, making of bread, lighting of a candle. Children with their quick perceptions are pleased to find your words coincide with their own little daily experience.

Use the blackboard with outline pictures or a few striking words in colors—real pictures, if you can get or make them—and they will convey or deepen correct impressions; objects, when they are fitting or really helpful, but never strive for originality when it is only startling or sensational. Children are genuine, and will be sure to detect what is done merely for effect. Of all others the primary-class teacher needs constant, patient, ingenious efforts and endless freshness and vivacity, for children do not love cold routine. Sometimes begin with a vivid picture, sometimes questions from all, then from individuals and divisions of the class, sometimes call for texts in concert, and vary with singing and expressive motions with the hands which interest and rest.

The teacher must *know* the scholars each by name, keeping a record of the attendance and place of residence. If possible, know the parents and visit the homes, the better to adapt your teaching to the age and capacity of the children.

## TRUE SOURCE OF TEACHING POWER.

No other class requires a greater amount of thorough, systematic, laborious study than this one; a *clear* and *correct* understanding of the Scripture truth; a power to simplify and render it attractive, but not to detract from its purity or strength; then to adapt it to opening minds, and with wisdom and skill to come with winning words and manner before the eager, inquiring children ready to receive impressions that eternity alone will fully reveal.

Can love do all this? Yes. Founded on Christian faith, love is fruitful in expedients, tireless in industry, patient under discouragements, and love only is equal to the task. True consecration can be born only of love to Christ and love to souls. The consecrated heart will bring back to him whatever gifts he has first bestowed, and will seek for instruction of Him “who giveth liberally and upbraideth not” our ignorance and our failures. He

who had compassion on the hungry multitude helped the willing disciples to distribute his bounty, and the coarse, scant food, when blessed by him, became a royal feast. Then let those who would feed his little ones with the bread of life bring to him their labors and study, and remember it was only a little lad whose humble store was so blessed. So even our poor crumbs of knowledge and experience, touched by his gracious hand, may become a “feast unto salvation” to help many to be gathered at last at “the marriage supper of the Lamb.”



# *Methods in Mission Schools.*

BY MRS. GEORGE PARTRIDGE.



## IV.

### METHODS IN MISSION SCHOOLS.

[MRS. PARTRIDGE has been for about six years in charge of the boys of the primary department of the Biddle Market Mission School, St. Louis, of which Thomas Morrison is the founder, and to whose long and untiring fidelity it owes very much of its great success. Mrs. Partridge has about three hundred boys, ranging from six to fourteen years of age. The class is composed of boot-blacks and newsboys and city Arabs, and yet almost alone she holds and interests this very large and very difficult class from week to week and from year to year. Her methods must of course be adapted to the class of scholars with which she has to deal. She has kindly furnished a brief sketch of her class and its management, which we append.]

#### METHODS.

1st. I gave my boys to understand at the outset that they were the school and that I

was simply their servant and teacher. By this means I first gained their confidence, then their love. I never had any trouble, and have scarcely had to correct a boy at any time. I tell them if they must strike or bite or stick pins, or indulge in any such performances, I shall insist that they inflict them on me and not on my boys. I cannot have any of my boys hurt. This mode has been always effectual.

2d. I keep them busy. This is one great secret of holding attention. The exercises are constantly varied, and I always have a reserve lesson for instant use in case of emergencies, such as a fire or a passing procession. A fire was once raging opposite us at school-time. I had no scholars. I sent by the leader of the boys a message to the chief of the fire department. It was as follows: "If my boys are needed, retain them; if not, I must have them." They soon came rushing in like a flock of sheep. A little story of a similar fire, quickly told, order and quiet

were at once restored. There was once some trouble in my absence. The Catholics had taken offence, and tried to break up the class. When, on my return, I came in sight, the boys greeted me with hurrahs that amounted to lusty yells. I returned the salutation as vociferously as they gave it. "Ain't she funny?" was the quiet aside that greeted my ears as the tumult subsided. "Hurry up, boys; we'll be late," I remarked as I pressed rapidly through the crowd. They were in the school-room in a trice, and the difficulty was ended. While a gentleman was once temporarily in charge, one of the youngsters doffed his coat and squared for a fight, daring the teacher to come on and have it out.

3d. I make it a point always to greet the boys with a kind word when on the street or whenever I meet them. I love them, and try to give that love the most hearty and generous expression. Some of them never hear of Jesus save from my lips, so I strive that my lips shall speak only kind and loving

words to them and on all fit opportunities. I never chide them when discovered in mischief, preferring to reprove them by indirection. I encourage them in their work, whatever it may be, telling them that if they do it well they will have plenty to do and God will bless them in it however humble it may be. I have never received from any one of them an insult or an unkind word. It is with these boys not only a work of teaching and training, but of civilization as well.

4th. I endeavor as far as possible to appeal to their self-respect and better nature; and self-respect has often to be planted, for they are at first often entirely destitute of the article. I make the teaching as far as possible bear on the vices and bad habits of the scholars, but of course indirectly. If a boy is disorderly, I sometimes take him by the hand and go on with the lesson, reproving him perhaps privately and alone, but never in public or before the class.

5th. I strive to avoid monotony. Recapit-

ulation and review, concert recitation, songs, stories, catechism, golden texts, etc., are always in order, but not often in the same order.

6th. I endeavor to impress on these wild boys the fear of the Lord. Whether on the playground, in the schoolroom, at home or at their work, I try to make them feel that God is everywhere and sees them always ; that they only please him by doing right, and that Jesus is their best friend, their only helper and Saviour.

The following is a programme which is observed only in outline, the order being constantly varied, and sometimes radically changed :

#### ORDER OF EXERCISES.

1. Prayer.
2. Song.
3. Repeat, "God is in heaven."
4. Commandments.
5. Twenty-third Psalm.
6. Golden text.
7. Song.
8. Lesson.
9. Questions.
10. Review.
11. Song.
12. What have we learned to-day ?
13. Closing song.

## OUTLINE LESSON.

**HYPOCRISY AND PIETY. MARK 12:38-44.  
BLACKBOARD.****THE POOR WIDOW.**

HER GIFT,  
CHRIST'S VALUE,  
WHY ?

TWO MITES.  
MORE THAN THEY ALL GAVE.  
HEART GIFT.

We are to learn, dear children, to-day, about the poor widow. Look now at the board. Repeat the outline in concert. Also, "*The Lord seeth not as man seeth.*" Let us see how our Lord knew just how much this poor woman put into his treasury. He was sitting over against the money-boxes. Describe the women's court of the temple and the brazen money-chests. A rough ground plan may be drawn on the opposite side of the board. Throw in also at this point a brief, vivid word-picture of the rich, proud doctors and Pharisees in their gay flowing robes, making great display of their gold and silver as they dropped it into the trea-

sury ; also the widow alone, poorly clad, as she comes softly and quietly into the temple and lovingly gives her all to the Lord. Our Lord as he sat in the temple could overlook them all, and he saw the rich come proudly, in their costly garments and long robes and with great ado, and throw in their money. Some gave a great deal, some gave less, and had we seen them we should have thought they gave much more than the poor widow; but Jesus sees the heart and knows the thoughts, and as this poor woman came he knew what she was giving, what she was thinking about and how she loved him. So, calling his disciples to him, he said, You see this poor woman, how needy she is, and yet she has given her all, everything she has. Her great love for me has led her to do it. To-day Jesus is calling us, not to see how much others are giving, but how much we are giving, how much you and I are interested in him. What can we give that Jesus will prize ?

Write on the board,

## OUR MITES.

Get from class what they can offer to Jesus. Such answers as these will be elicited (write answers as given) :

*Mite of Love.*

*Mite of Kindness.*

*Mite of Kind Words.*

*Mite of Good Deeds.*

*Mite of Money.*

You may now all give me what you have brought for Jesus ; and as Jesus sees your heart, he will know whether you really give him this because you want to send his word to those who do not know him, or whether you throw it in, like the rich man, to be seen of men. (Here gather the offerings.) Next in order may be a song and a prayer that Jesus may bless the gift.

“I want to be like Jesus,  
Engaged in doing good,  
So that of us it may be said,  
We have done all we could.”

And now, children, is there any more important mite than that of money? Yes; the mite of love. Every little boy who is kind to his playmate, who, when he is in trouble, runs to help him out, or pick him up when he has fallen down, or is kind to his little sister, or takes care of baby, or does what he can to help his mother, and who does these things because Jesus wants us "to love one another" and "be kindly affectioned one to another," is giving to Jesus what he will most highly prize—his mite of love—and it will be precious to him like the widow's mite of money. If a naughty boy says bad words and strikes and kicks and hurts you, and you, instead of calling names and striking back, speak kindly and tell him it is wrong and Jesus will be displeased with such things, that will be a mite of kindness with which Jesus will be pleased. It may be the means of doing good and telling the bad boy about Jesus, of whom he perhaps has not heard in his home. Maybe he gets blows and kicks in

his home, and does not hear kind words at all. There are a great many mites of kind words. It costs but little to say a pleasant word, and sometimes it goes a great way. Many a boy has been made happy all day by kind looks and words from even a stranger, and how much better can we do for those whom we know and whom we see every day!

There was once a kind lady who told me she made it a point never to pass a newsboy or a washwoman—in fact, no one with whom she came in contact—without a kind word and a pleasant smile. Often she would offer a little tract or book or some little thing to cheer them on in their hard work. It was a “*little mite*,” but sometimes did a great deal of good. If we could have a pleasant thought with each one we meet, how much happier should we be, as well as those to whom we do the kindness!

And now, dear children, as we go home let us think of that poor widow. We are none of us poorer than she was. We can all of us

give Jesus our mites this week. Let us ask him to help us in giving our mite of money, of love, of kindness, of good deeds, of pleasant smiles, of kind words. He will bless us if we really desire it and earnestly ask him to help us. Oh how I wish we all loved Jesus as did that poor widow! that Jesus could see our hearts as warm and loving and anxious to do good as was hers! Perhaps some of us do not love Jesus. If not, we must ask God to give us new hearts, and then, like the poor widow, whatever we do for Jesus he will accept and bless.

#### REPEAT IN CONCERT.

“Keep the heart tender  
With flowers of kind deeds,  
And the sweets of their perfume  
Will choke out the weeds;  
And the soft beams of pity,  
Of mercy and love,  
Will yield it a glory  
That beams from above.”

Recapitulate the lesson, so as to impress on the memory a few simple points made.

Repeat in concert—

“The Lord seeth not as man seeth.”

“Love one another.”

“The Lord watch between me and thee  
when we are absent one from another.”

Sing as the class passes out—

“Have you spent a pleasant day?

Come again, come again;

Would you learn the better way?

Then come, come again.”

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The following points are used by Mrs. Partidge around which to cluster most beautiful and suggestive lessons:

#### FOUR DOORS TO THE HEART.

Hearing, Seeing, Fearing, Loving.

#### THREE THINGS PROMISED WHEN WE REACH HEAVEN.

1. A white robe.
2. A bright crown.
3. A harp.

The following lesson was given at the Chatauqua Sabbath-school Assembly.

My dear children, where is God? *Answer.*—Everywhere. Yes; in these woods the same as in our church, at home, on the banks of this beautiful lake. Yes; right here in this tent. Yes; God is everywhere. What have we met here for? *Answer.*—To sing and pray. Is there any command to pray? *Answer in concert.*—Yes; pray without ceasing, morning, noon and night; in everything give thanks. [Here followed prayer, closing with the Lord's Prayer as found in Matt. vi. 9, the scholars all joining.] Have we any command to sing? *Answer.*—“Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord.” My children, the beautiful birds all sing their morning song. Let us all join our voices in singing his praise. Rise and sing, “I have a Father in the promised land.” Yes; God is our Father. He once gave to Moses ten laws or commandments which were written on two tables of stone. Could you write on stone?

*Answer.*—No. What power, what strength, God has! Let us repeat the commandments. [They were repeated.] What good will it do us to know these unless we practice them?

*Answer.*—No good. There are three ways to reach your hearts—hearing, knowing, loving. If I learn all God's laws, be able to repeat all the Bible stories, and do not love him, it will do me no good. I must let Jesus into my heart, and must love him. Hear what the Bible says about the heart before we love Jesus and after we do love him: “The heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked.” “A new heart will I give you; a new spirit will I put into you.” They will be good thoughts, good feelings, such as we never had before. And now, children, we will stand and repeat a concert finger exercise:

Oh, what can little hands do? etc.

[Children answer, with fingers moving.]

Oh, what can little lips do? etc.

[Answer with fingers on the lips.]

Oh, what can little eyes do? etc.

[Answer with fingers on the eyes.]

“When heart and hands and lips unite  
To please the King of heaven,  
And serve the Saviour with delight,  
Such grace to mine be given.”

[The children raise their hands in an attitude of prayer.]

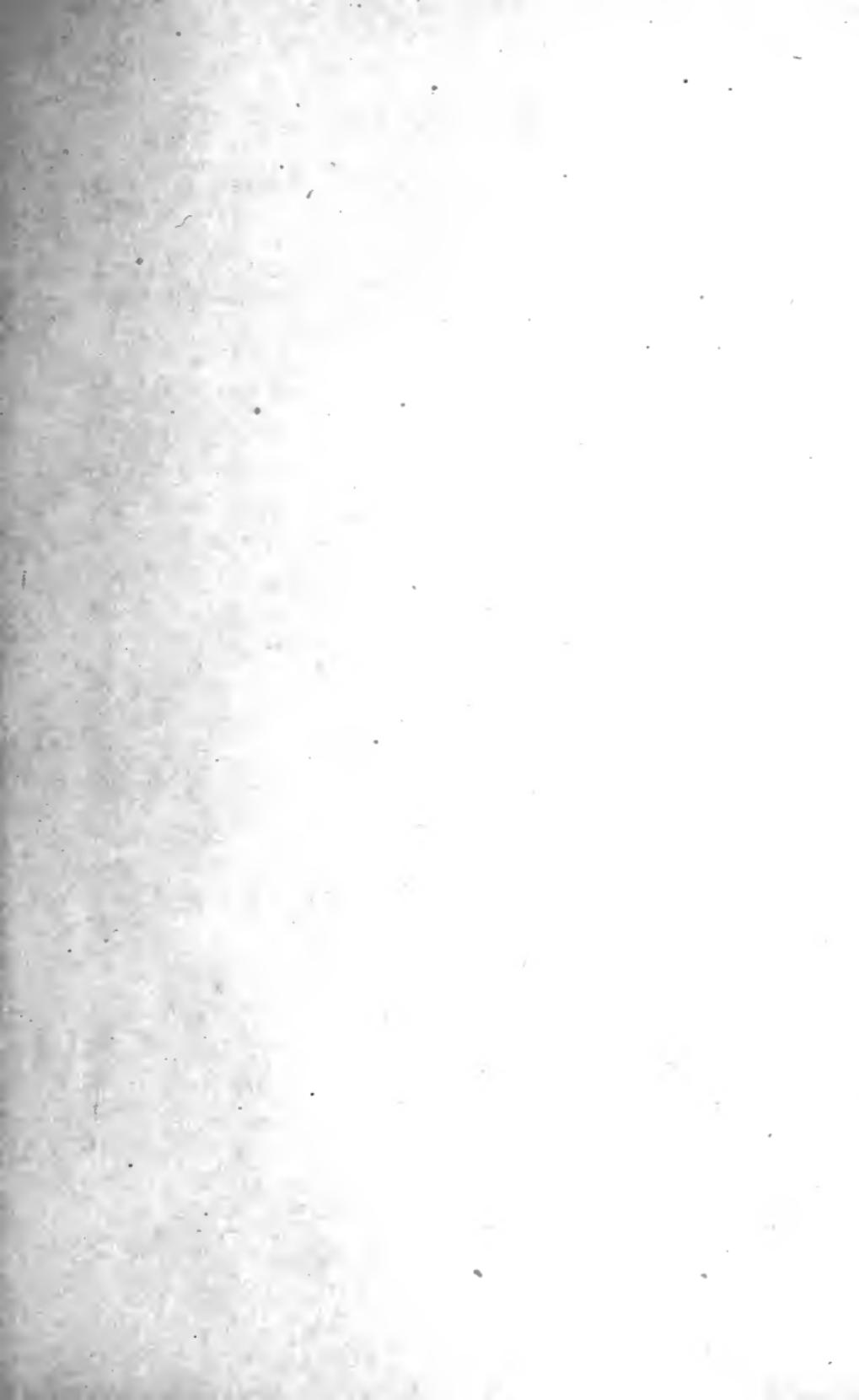
Yes, dear children, this last line is a prayer; and may God give you his grace, his love, to serve him! How many of you know verses in the Bible? [Hands raised.] The four greatest lessons in the Bible are the Lord’s Prayer, the Ten Commandments, the twenty-third Psalm and the Sermon on the Mount. Who can repeat them? Not one? Well, then, we will try and learn them, and you must get your dear mothers to help you at home. Let me give you to carry home a pair of golden gloves. For your right hand—Don’t swear or steal or lie or cheat or fight. For your left hand—Don’t drink or smoke or chew. Love God; love each other.

## HELPS FOR PRIMARY TEACHERS.

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